

Quick Clues to English

LBCC Developmental Studies

CAPITALIZATION

Capitalize proper nouns which name *specific* persons, places, and things. (Since a complete list would be impossible to compile, examples follow.)

Proper Noun

Charlie Brown
Psychology 101
Chicago
New Hampshire
Albany High School
Waverly Lake
Wagonwheel Road
Mom (used as a name)
Internal Revenue Service
the Northwest
Any deity (Athena, God)
Declaration of Independence
Purim

Common Noun

a boy
a psychology class
a city
a state
my high school
a lake in Albany
a road near my house
my mom
a tax service
go west two blocks
a god
a document
a spring holiday

Capitalize the names of *specific* courses (not of general subjects).

I took a course called Modern U.S. History since I'm majoring in history.

I enjoy foreign foods but could not fit in the class called Culinary Goods 201.

Capitalize words that name a part of the country, not words that refer to a direction.

Gretchen is either from the South or the Midwest.
Go east two miles before heading south on 99.

Capitalize *family relationships* only when used as a name.

I know *Mom* doesn't like chocolate.
My mom doesn't like chocolate.

Capitalize *titles* of persons only when used as part of a proper name.

I hope President Cavin will meet with the students.
Our college president will meet with the students.

Do not capitalize seasons or school terms.

I like spring more than winter or fall.
Did you know fall term has fewer class days than spring term?

Capitalize the *first, last, and all major* words in titles of books, articles, poems, and songs.

We read Gone with the Wind.
Did you read *Four Views from the Top*?

Capitalize nationalities and languages.

Most Americans enjoy Mexican Food
Learning to speak French and Spanish is easier for Americans than learning Chinese.

Capitalize the first word of a quoted sentence.

He said, "This is the last straw!"
He said that it was the last straw.